

PREPAREDNESS ACTION PLAN

There are several other actions that can be taken to mitigate the risk from wildfire. These range from knowing how to evacuate safely in the face of a wildfire to training fire personnel in the techniques of fighting wildfire in the wildland urban interface. In the following paragraphs each mitigation element is identified, the party responsible for implementation of the element is identified, potential source(s) of funding are listed, and a timeframe for completion of the element is suggested.

Disaster Planning (Fire)

The county has adopted an Emergency Operation Plan (EOP) to address the management of emergency operations in case of a disaster such as a wildfire. The EOP should be periodically reviewed and updated, when necessary, to address new and emerging fire fighting technology and techniques.

Review Emergency Operation Plan

Goals and Objectives: Reduce the risk to life and property by improving the coordination of emergency response to the threat of wildfire.

Who is Responsible: County Office of Emergency Management

Funding Source: Grant funds are available from the Idaho Bureau of Disaster Services, Pre-Disaster Mitigation Program.

Timeframe for completion: Review EOP annually

Facilities

New Fire Stations

The need for new facilities will re-occur periodically in the future as the community grows in population. Several of the fire districts have current plans or future plans to build new fire stations.

Goals and Objectives: Reduce the risk to life and property by placing emergency response personnel and equipment in a position to reduce response time.

Who is Responsible: Local Fire Districts

Potential Funding Source: Grant funds are available from the Idaho Department of Commerce, Idaho Community Development Block Grant Program

Timeframe for completion: Ongoing

Equipment

Additional equipment is a high priority for the fire districts as a mitigation to impending wildfires. They are in need of equipment that provides multi-capability adaptable to wildland fire suppression.

Fire Apparatus

Several of the fire districts expressed a need for wildland fire engines in order to address the increasing threat from wildfires. The engines will allow for quick response and off road capability enabling the districts to attack wildfires that threaten structures.

Goals and Objectives: Reduce the risk to life and property by providing emergency response personnel with the type of apparatus that will improve their ability to fight fires in the wildland urban interface.

Who is Responsible: Local Fire Districts

Potential Funding Sources: Grant funds are available from the following sources Idaho Dept. of Commerce, Idaho Community Development Block Grant Program; Idaho Dept. of Lands - Federal Excess Property, Volunteer Fire Assistance, State Fire Assistance; Bureau of Land Management – Rural Fire Assistance; FEMA and US Fire Administration Program – Assistance to Firefighters; US Fish and Wildlife Service – FWS

Timeframe for completion: Ongoing

Personal Protective Equipment

Fire district personnel are in need of personal protective equipment such as nomex, helmets, turnouts, etc. in order to safely perform their duties as firefighters.

Goals and Objectives: Reduce the risk to fire fighters by providing personal protective equipment so they can perform their duties safely.

Who is Responsible: Fire Districts

Potential funding sources: Grant funds are available from the following sources. Idaho Dept. of Lands - Volunteer Fire Assistance, State Fire Assistance; Bureau of Land Management – Rural Fire Assistance; FEMA and US Fire Administration Program – Assistance to Firefighters; US Fish and Wildlife Service – FWS.

Timeframe for completion: Ongoing

Water Supply

Water supply for the purpose of fighting fire will be addressed in a fire safe ordinance that will be proposed by the county Fire Chiefs (see Fire Safe Ordinance section). The Chiefs also identified the need for standardized dry hydrants around the county. The standardization of dry hydrants throughout the county will required coordination among the fire departments and districts. This is best accomplished through the Fire Chiefs association.

Goals and Objectives: Reduce the risk to life and property by improving the ability of fire response personnel to efficiently and effectively respond to mutual aid requests.

Who is Responsible: District Fire Chiefs with IDL and USFS

Potential Funding Sources: Grant funds are available from Idaho Community Development Block Grant Program through the Idaho Department of Commerce

Timeframe for completion: Initiate in 2004. Complete by 2006

Communications

The need for standardized communications capability has been recognized in the County's Emergency Operations Plan. In addition, the County's Communications Plan focuses on the need to upgrade existing systems to enhance interoperability between responders. A plan is currently in place for the construction, installation and purchase of equipment needed to meet this need. Funds to facilitate this process are coming from a Homeland Security grant and other grant sources.

Goals and Objectives: Reduce the risk to life and property by improving coordination and communication between emergency response personnel.

Who is responsible: Bonner County Department of Emergency Management along with local, state, and federal emergency response agencies.

Potential Funding Sources: Grant funds are available from the following sources. FEMA and the U.S. Fire Administration Program, Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Rural Fire Assistance; and BLM, Rural Fire Assistance

Timeframe for completion: Ongoing

Training

Local fire departments and districts should continue to take advantage of training offered by IDL and the Forest Service. Additional training aids are available from Firewise for the cost of shipping. Training materials from Firewise include such topics as “Firefighter Safety in the Wildland/Urban Interface”, and “Fire Behavior in the Wildland/Urban Interface.” Training materials can be requested through the Firewise website at www.firewise.org.

Goals and Objectives: Reduce the risk to life and property by improving the ability of emergency response personnel to respond to the threat of fire in the interface.

Who is responsible: Local fire agencies

Potential Funding Sources: Grant funds are available from the following sources. Idaho Department of Lands, Volunteer Fire Assistance; U.S. Fish and Wildlife and BLM, Rural Fire Assistance program.

Timeframe for completion: Ongoing

Public Education

Home Hazard Assessments

There is a need for consistency in the way homes are evaluated around the county for fire safe attributes. It is proposed that a uniform method of evaluation be used by the BONFIRE Program and the fire districts in the county. A form was developed by the Department of Lands for this very purpose. It is recommended that the IDL form to be used when evaluation homes for fire safe attributes. A copy of the Home Hazard Assessment form can be found in Appendix I, on pages 66 and 67.

Goals and Objectives: Reduce the risk to life and property by increasing the public awareness of the risk to wildfire in the interface and how to mitigate the risk.

Who is responsible: BONFIRE Program in collaboration with local fire agencies.

Potential Funding Sources: Grant funds are available from the Bureau of Land Management’s Communities at Risk program.

Timeframe for Completion: Initiate in summer 2004-Continuous thereafter

Public Awareness

The public must be kept aware of the threat a wildland urban interface fire presents and how to be prepared in advance of such an event. A public awareness campaign is essential to this task. A public education program using local media, fire safe brochures and flyers, public appearances and other means should be initiated to fulfill this need.

Goals and Objectives: Reduce the risk to life and property through public education.

Who is Responsible: BONFIRE Program in collaboration with local fire agencies.

Potential Funding Sources: Grant funds are available from the following sources through BLM and US Fish and Wildlife Services for Communities at Risk; US Fish and Wildlife Service and BLM – Rural Fire Assistance grant; Idaho Firefighters Special License Plate Fund.

Start Date: Spring 2004 and continuous thereafter

Fire Safe Ordinance

The fire districts and agencies recognize the need for “fire safe” construction on new homes and in new developments. This would require new homes to be built using fire-safe building materials as well as provide adequate water supply for fighting fire, create a defensible/survivable space around a new home, and provide adequate egress and ingress.

Goals and Objective: Reduce the risk to life and property by improving the ability of responding fire personnel to access and defend dwellings threatened by wildfire.

Who is responsible: Local fire agencies in conjunction with the Board of Commissioners, real estate association, and local contractors.

Potential Funding Sources: N/A

Timeframe for completion: Initiate process in the spring of 2004.